



REPORT FROM MR. ANDREWS, MINISTER  
RESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AT  
STOCKHOLM: ON PAUPERISM & POOR-  
LAWS IN SWEDEN AND NORWAY...



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Of The United States At Stockholm: On  
Pauperism & Poor-laws In Sweden And Norway...

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## REPORT FROM MR. ANDREWS.

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No. 336.]

*Mr. Andrews to Mr. Fish.*

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,

*Stockholm, May 23, 1876.*

SIR: It seems now to be admitted that Poor-laws, as administered in some countries, have not only tended to propagate pauperism, but to exert a general demoralizing influence. This fact, taken in connection with the large immigration the United States have received and are likely in future to receive from among the poorer classes of Sweden and Norway, will perhaps make it of some interest to the Department to be informed as to the character and operation of the poor-laws of these countries; and more especially as their policy on this important subject may reflect light upon kindred questions.

### PHYSICAL CAUSES AFFECTING PAUPERISM.

Looking at the Scandinavian peninsula on the map, one might infer that its climate was particularly severe, and that it would necessarily have more poor people than other countries. Such is probably the popular idea, and yet I think it is not a correct one. The Scandinavian winter is long and rigorous, it is true, and



it is undoubtedly a drawback to the production and accumulation of wealth. Indeed, the ancient Swedes reckoned time by winters instead of years. Yet, from the influence of the sea temperature, the climate is not so severe as strangers generally suppose.

I have shown in a previous dispatch that the winter temperature at Stockholm is but slightly lower than that of the State of New York, and that the harbours on the western coast of Norway remain open the year round. The length of the days in summer is almost equivalent to an extra summer month. Autumn-sown wheat and rye are leading and successful crops in Sweden. All varieties of apples are raised on more than a third part of the territory of the peninsula, which, after that of Russia, is the largest of any power in Europe. Admitting, however, that the winter is an obstacle to wealth, so, in one respect, it helps to prevent poverty, for it makes foresight compulsory. The Scandinavians are undoubtedly better housed and live more comfortably in the winter than the inhabitants of southern climes. A French traveller who visited Sweden in the winter of 1634 states that the people were "neither ragged nor hungry, as with us." "Among the ancient Swedes," says Geijer, "the poor were so few that the first Christians could only find a use for their alms in foreign countries." There are traditions of ancient plenty in the country. Norse literature that is seven hundred years old show us the Norwegian as he tilled the soil a thousand years ago, and represents that one of his strong reasons against Christianity was the absurdity of abstaining from labor one whole day out of every seven. In recent times Sweden's export of grain in a very good year has exceeded four bushels to each inhabitant.

Failures of crops are perhaps no more frequent than in other countries. In both Sweden and Norway land is abundant, and for the most part owned by those who cultivate it. Stock-raising and the dairy are remunerative, and capable of a much larger development. The forests, mining, and the fisheries are important resources. Manufactures are progressing fairly ; and, besides, there is the great industry of maritime transportation, the united tonnage of both countries being next to that of the United States, and the third in extent in the world.

While it can thus be seen that, so far as nature is concerned, the inhabitants of the peninsula have no special cause for poverty, it may be well supposed that in times past war and pestilence have, singly or together, produced much destitution. Sir Archibald Alison does not, probably, exaggerate when he says that Sweden did not recover in half a century from the loss entailed by the wars of Charles XII. "The sufferings of the people in those times," says Geijer, "pass our conception." The pestilence which occasionally raged in previous centuries was even more appalling in its effects. That, for example, of the fourteenth century, which came through Norway from England, utterly desolated many parts of the country, so that, after a long period had passed, churches were discovered in the midst of forests. The plague came again in 1350-'60, and at later times.

Such were the numbers of poor people whom wars and failures of crops had collected about the capital in the middle of the sixteenth century that the King's councilors, according to a government record of that time, complained that their carriages, on the way to the palace over the north bridge in Stockholm, were obstructed by the mass of beggars which besieged them.

## HISTORICAL NOTICE OF SWEDISH POOR-LAWS.

The old provincial laws of Sweden prescribed the duty of families to provide for their sick and needy members, and for the protection of the community against vagabonds and beggars.

A law of the province of Upland required the pauper and maimed person to be passed from village to village, and that each farmer should support them a day and night. It was not till after the Reformation that the care of the poor became a subject of State legislation; and even then it was treated as a voluntary matter, as was the case in the church law of 1571—eleven years after Gustavus Vasa's death. This law, among other things, authorised the clergy to issue begging letters, which authorised the holder to solicit alms. After more than a century, in 1686, such letters were prohibited from being used outside the parish in which they were issued. It will be remembered that the first complete poor-law of England, that of 43d Elizabeth, was passed in 1601. In 1624, under Gustavus Adolphus, a royal proposition to the Riksdag sets forth that there was danger of mendicancy getting more and more the upper hand in all the counties; that the hospitals in the towns were so badly supported and administered that no one, however wretched, would demand admission into them; that thereafter in every county there ought to be a central hospital; that poor children able to earn their subsistence should be put out to service; and that separate houses should be built for those of tender age. But the only result of that plan was the so-called child-house, "Barnhuset," in Stockholm, an institution which still exists. The yeomanry, who from time immemorial had



exercised political rights, in their chamber of the Riksdag made objection to the plan on the ground that the burden would fall chiefly on them. (The nobility, on the score of rendering military service, had for centuries been exempt from the payment of taxes.) An act of February 28, 1642, required the building of poor-houses at the churches where already not existing.

The church-law of 1686 required pastors to see that the poor of the parish were not left uncared for, but it seems that it was not till the law of 1698 was enacted that any compulsory provision was made for the poor. That act required that on certain occasions, such as the first publication of marriage banns, funeral ale, churching of women, thanksgiving for recovery, inventory after death, and the receipt of legacies, dues should be paid to the poor. By the act of 1734, sixteen years after the death of Charles XII., all who lived in a parish were required to build and maintain the poor-house. As early as 1749, when Sweden's system of statistics was first established, pastors were required to make returns to the central government of the number of differently classified paupers.

The law of December 5, 1788, authorized parishes to refuse the acquirement of settlement in their limits by any one whom it supposed might in future require public support. From 1803 to 1855 legislation in regard to pauperism was frequent. The law of 1853 so extended the right to relief that there became, says the report of the bureau of statistics for 1870, open complaint as to the largely-increasing burden of poor-care.

#### SYNOPSIS OF THE PRESENT POOR-LAW OF SWEDEN.

Recently two important reforms have been adopted in

the Swedish poor-law. Previous to 1871 relief was granted about as a matter of course to every applicant, but by the Act of June 9, 1871, it cannot be granted, as a general rule, except to those that lack the ability to earn their support. The beneficial effects of this change are already clearly perceptible. The other reform consists in the obligation of every local poor-board to send annually to the central bureau of statistics a detailed report as to the number, cost of support, &c., of its poor. The bureau of statistics is now preparing its first report since the plan went into operation, and after its publication, towards the end of this year, one will be able to acquire much fuller information on the whole subject of pauperism in Sweden than is now the case. Section 1 of the law of 1871 provides that needful poor-care shall be granted to any minor under the age of fifteen, or person who, in consequence of old age, defect in body or mind, is incompetent to acquire what is absolutely requisite for sustaining life, and lacks means of his own and support and care by another.

Section 2 provides that for the granting of poor-care in other case than what is mentioned in section 1 the poor district must prescribe the grounds on which its administration shall act. Where these have not been prescribed, the administration will grant poor-care to the extent it finds needful.

The law further provides that every parish in the country, and every city or trading town which has its own communal administration, shall comprise a separate poor district, to be managed according to resolutions of the communal meeting, or, where there are communal deputies, by them, and in cities by the common council.

In the country a commune, or poor district can divide

itself into subdistricts, ("rotar,") with the obligation of every subdistrict to provide for its own poor: but under extraordinary circumstances a subdistrict may receive contribution from the whole district.

A poor district may singly, or by uniting with a neighbouring district, build a compulsory work-house, but in every such case application must be made to the State government, through the country government. Every poor-district is enjoined to manage in accordance with law its poor-care in the manner best adapted to its section of country, nevertheless so that begging may be prevented, and to regard as important the providing of workhouses for such as stand in need of household relief, and to endeavour through the creation of saving funds to prevent, so far as possible, the need of poor care or relief in future. In other words, to make the prevention of pauperism a main feature of their policy.

The communal supervisors are the overseers of the poor, or poor-board. The pastor is, by virtue of office, a member of the board. The number of the poor-board is not to be less than five in any city, nor less than three in the country. They are chosen by the qualified electors of the commune. In subdistricts the poor-care is managed by one supervisor, to be chosen by such subdistrict. The voting by the poor-board is open, but secret ballots may be used when demanded.

Applications for relief are to be made to the chairman of the poor-board of the district in which the applicant lives, to the pastor, or to the person specially assigned to receive such applications, or to a police officer. The proper authority must procure exact information as to the applicant's condition and manner of life, and whether, and to what degree, relief should be granted; and, where



a child is to be cared for, to see that it is provided with a fixed residence, and even instruction and Christian nurture.

No one, on account of future risk of poor-burden, shall be prevented from choosing a place of residence, thus repealing the old provision in regard to settlement.

Beggars are to be arrested, and may be sentenced to public work not less than one month nor more than six months ; or they may be sentenced to work in the county jail.

A person who, from indolence or indifference, causes a child or wife to need poor-care, must himself stand in custody of the poor-board till the expenses are paid. For misbehavior a pauper's rations may be reduced. [It is the practice in some poor-houses also to require inmates who violate the regulations to wear a dress of particular color which marks them as offenders.] Minors under fifteen years of age are liable to receive corporal punishment.

A pauper or an applicant for relief who wishes to make complaint, does it through the chairman of the poor-board, who must immediately forward it to the chairman of the communal assembly, magistracy, or council, who lays it before the communal meeting. If the latter tries it, the decision is communicated to the governor of the county.

A poor-district which has duly furnished aid to any one whose residence is in another district, shall be reimbursed by the latter district on proper requisition.

Where, in a district, the revenues from real property and income-tax, from fines, church collections, donations, and other such receipts are insufficient for defraying the expense of poor-care, there shall be levied in addition a



personal tax of not exceeding 50 "öre" (18 cents and 4 mills) for each male, and 25 "öre" (6 cents and 7 mills) for each female who is a resident of the district and has attained the age of eighteen years. What is required thereover is to be supplied by the ordinary levy for supplying the deficiency of local revenue.

As it is sometimes the case in Sweden that a landed property comprising iron mills, mines, or manufactories embraces a large area, to the extent of a township or more, and upon which hundreds of people are residing, the law provides that where the poor-burden of the district in which such property is situated exceeds the ordinary revenue, the poor-board may agree with the proprietor of the estate for supplying the deficiency. But where no agreement is had, the county governor may, after the proprietor has been heard in the matter, in his discretion, impose upon him a proper yearly contribution, but not exceeding 10 "kronor"\* (\$2.68) for each household or mess. So the proprietor is allowed, if he prefers, to assume individual responsibility for the care of the poor on his estate, in which case he is exempt from one-half the above-mentioned tax for supplying the deficiency of local revenue.

Every poor-board is required to make statistical returns according to form prescribed by the State government.

#### STATISTICS OF PAUPERISM IN SWEDEN.

The last report which has been published on pauperism in the whole kingdom of Sweden is that issued by the bureau of statistics for the year 1870; but it is acknow-

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\* 1 kronor is equivalent to \$0.26  $\frac{80}{100}$ .

ledged to be based on returns less reliable and complete than what may be expected under the law of 1871. From this report it appears that the number of poor-districts was 2,434, and of subdistricts, 3,017. The number of poor-houses in the country district was 2,400, with room for 20,000 persons; also, about the same number of cottages, with room for 10,000 persons. The number of poor who received full support was 85,147, of whom the remarkably large number of 36,985 were children; the number receiving part but not full support was 119,231, or of both classes together 204,378, being 49 to every 1,000 inhabitants, or 4.9 per cent. (If to this number should be added those who received help for numerous permanent charitable institutions and funds, it would be increased by several thousands of persons, as will be seen further on.) Of the whole number of poor, 167,665 lived in the country, and 36,713 in cities.

From 1864 to 1870, the increase in the number of children who received full support was 11,655. "This large increase of children who needed full care," says the report, "has been specially complained of by several districts, which have attributed the causes thereof to the increase in the number of illegitimate children; increased neglect of parents, and particularly the fathers, to provide for the family's support; removals, emigration from the country," &c.

Of the whole number of poor, 80,666 were males, and 123,712 were females. This large proportion of females is ascribed to the fact that they are longer-lived in Sweden than males. The average duration of life for females is 46.4 years; for males, 42.8 years. There were in the country 28,153 males and 38,359 females who received full support, and 39,607 males and 61,546

females who received part but not full support. In the cities, 8,988 males and 9,647 females received full support, and 3,918 males and 14,160 females who received part but not full support.

The number of adults who received full support in poor houses were, males, 5,450; females, 10,516; the number who received full support, but not in poor houses, were, males, 13,365; females, 18,831. It does not appear how many children were in poor-houses.

Of ninety cities in the kingdom, one quarter part report having one or more work-houses.

The report does not show how many persons received out-door relief, but the remark is made that it is not to be taken for granted that all who received full care were actually in a public poor-house.

The public receipts for poor-care were as follows: Rent of real property, church collections, &c., 813,661 kronor; personal tax, 552,872 kronor; real property and income tax, 4,908,700 kronor; appropriations by the State, 73,630 kronor; defrayed by other poor-districts than those in which relief was afforded, 66,758 kronor, or together, 6,238,502 kronor. It may be here remarked that owing to the failure of crops, chiefly in the northern counties, between 1866 and 1869, the State granted relief to the amount of 441,960 kronor, and loaned certain counties or parishes 2,637,615 kronor, all of which latter amount has been repaid.

The expenditures for the poor were in the country 4,148,375 kronor, and in cities 1,873,970 kronor, or together, 6,022,345 kronor, (\$1,605,961.) Besides this there was disbursed for the poor the annual interest—say 800,000 kronor—on numerous private and permanent charitable funds or endowments, amounting in



the aggregate to 16,000,000 kronor. In addition thereto, of course, were the ordinary transient contributions for charitable purposes, the help extended by hundreds of mechanical, trade, and labor unions, the public provision for maintaining institutions for the deaf, dumb, blind, &c. So, also, there were over seventy public hospitals for the sick, not including military hospitals nor those for children, besides nine asylums for the insane; all of which received pauper as well as paying patients. The cost of administration of these hospitals is not included in the above-mentioned expenditures for the poor, and their existence tends to lessen the actual poor-budget.

#### PAUPERISM IN STOCKHOLM.

Separate annual reports are prepared at the statistical bureau on poor-care in the city of Stockholm. The latest of these is for the year 1874, and is a neatly-printed octavo document of 42 pages. From this report it appears that the number of persons in Stockholm who directly received relief out of the public money was 7,788.

The average population of the city for the year was 148,847, so that the proportion of paupers was 52 in every 1,000 inhabitants, or  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. In 1873 it was  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and in 1872 it was  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. There were 5,382 who received aid under the first and 2,406 who received aid under the second paragraph of the poor-law.

There were 4,447 who were inmates either of poor or work houses, and 3,341 who received outdoor relief; of which latter number 1,585 were children or minors, and 1,756 were adults. Of the adults who received outdoor relief, 101 had no children at home, while 655 had,



in all, 1,879 children at home. This last number receiving help indirectly through their parents are not included, as I have ascertained, in the whole number, 7,788, above mentioned. Of the 1,585 children who received direct outdoor relief,  $25\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. were illegitimate; while of 159 children supported in the two public institutions for boys and girls, 29.56 per cent. were illegitimate. Here it may be stated that only about one hundred actions a year are brought in Stockholm against fathers of illegitimate children to recover means for the latter's support; and of these only about three-fourths are in any part successful. The average number of persons who received outdoor relief each month was 2,056.

The expense of outdoor relief for those over fifteen years of age was 49,543 kronor, and for those under fifteen years of age, 75,818 kronor, in all, say, 125,000 kronor, which was one-quarter part of the city's public disbursement for the poor.

Till within a few years each parish in Stockholm had its separate poor-house; but now, with the exception of the so-called military poor-house, and the two in Catharine and Maria parishes, those for adults had already in 1874 been consolidated into three large establishments. Of the 4,447 persons who were at poor or work houses, 153 were in the poor-house of Maria parish, 141 in that of Catharine parish, 1,048 at the Sabbatsberg poor-house, 1784 in the poor and work house at Kungsholm, 990 in the work-house at the south part of the city, 128 in the military poor-house, 131 in the institution for boys, and 28 in that for girls.

The sleeping-apartments in the work and poor houses are much crowded. At the work-house at Kungsholm the working-rooms, however, are spacious and airy.

This latter institution, singular to say, has a department of lunatics and idiots.

The Sabbatsberg institution dates from 1754, at which time it had room for 300 persons. It is rather pleasantly situated, at the northwest outskirts of the city, in the neighbourhood of the Rörstrand Porcelain Works, and has about 12 acres of elevated ground. Belonging to it are two modern buildings of brick, large and spacious, besides three or four old ones. Only its sick and helpless inmates receive full support. The others receive, daily, food of the value of 12 öre, ( $3\frac{1}{4}$  cents,) also  $2\frac{1}{4}$  kronor (69 cents) per month. They furnish their own clothing and bedding. They have a free place to cook their coffee, and at the main kitchen can buy cooked food at cost rates, according to a fixed list of prices. They must themselves earn the rest for support in or out of the institution. There are 48 inmates who enjoy a pension ranging from 4 to 130 kronor. There is a very small library, which is much used. A few of the inmates are of noble birth.

The expenses of this Sabbatsberg institution, which on some accounts it has been seen is a peculiar one, were for the year 1874 81,970 kronor, or 78 kronor per inmate ; but the interest on the property is not included in that amount.

The person who manages the establishment, and who is also the cashier, drawing, holding, and disbursing the above sum, receives as salary 2,100 kronor (\$562.80) per annum in money, moderate quarters, nine cords of wood, the use of a garden, 80 pounds of tallow-candles, and 400 kronor for clerk-hire. He gives bond only in the sum of 5,000 kronor. He is competent, and, besides his own integrity, the fact that he can hold his office during good

behavior, and that he is reasonably sure of a pension should he become incapable of filling it, constitute the best guarantee of his fidelity. It is very easy to see how the economy of such an institution might be sacrificed, as would be the case in some of our cities, if its manager was changed, not, indeed, with the rise and fall of political parties, but with every triumph of a new municipal clique.

The total public expenditures for all the poor amounted to 592,711.70 kronor, (\$158,846,) which was at the rate 76.12 kronor (\$20.40) for each person, being 10 kronor more per head than for the previous year. Deducting, however, from said total sum 83,081 kronor and 85 öre, being the net earnings of the poor and work house inmates, leaves the sum of 509,639 kronor and 85 öre (\$136,580) as the actual outlay for the poor from the city treasury. Besides this sum, the disbursements out of the income from endowments, to which general reference has already been made, form no small item. Many benevolent people have given while living, or bequeathed in their wills, to societies sums to be permanently invested, and the interest of which is to be applied for the poor. In Gothenburg, which is more of a commercial city than Stockholm, yet having less than half as large a population, these endowments amount to over seven millions of kronor. In Stockholm they amount at the present time to 5,622,955 kronor, and are administered by upward of sixty different boards of directors or societies. The interest on that sum at 5 per cent. would give an annual revenue of 281,147 kronor. Perhaps all of the funds are not invested at so much as 5 per cent. interest; and, besides, there is some expense of administration. At any rate, it appears that for 1874 sixty-



three of these boards of administration, for 126 separate funds, reported to the poor-board of Stockholm that they had expended of the income from said funds 257,681 kronor (being 23,466 kronor less than what the interest would amount to at 5 per cent.) in poor-relief to 4,014 persons. This sum, equivalent to \$69,058, added to the \$136,580 of actual public expenditure, gives the amount of \$205,638.

The main object of the reports of these several boards or associations appears to be to inform the city poor-board as to the identity of the persons receiving relief, so that the poor-board itself shall not, at least without knowing it, be helping the same persons at the same time.

It seems that the poor-board is put to some inconvenience because these private associations and boards do not report how much they give to each person whom they assist. If now we add this number, 4,014, supported in whole or in part from the endowments, to the number receiving in or out door relief at public expense, it will make 11,802 persons who received full or part support in 1874. Again, if to this number we add the before-mentioned 1,879 children who indirectly received public help through their parents, it gives the large number of 13,681 who received relief from the public treasury or from charitable associations, being 9 per cent. of the population.

Nor is this all; for not included in that number are the inmates of several well-endowed charitable institutions in Stockholm which do not report to the city poor-board. Prominent among these is the "Freemason's Child-House." This institution is finely situated at Kungsholm, with 60 acres of park-ground and field on which are many beautiful oaks and other trees. The



buildings, which are modern and spacious, overlook a navigable inlet, on which the military academy is situated. It was established in 1753 as a foundling asylum, but now receives only legitimate children—boys and girls from seven to fifteen years of age—generally the children of poor widows. It has occupied its present site only since 1864, and can accommodate 200 children. It now has 94 boys and 36 girls. Besides receiving common-school instruction, the boys learn something of the tailor's and shoemaker's trades and gardening, and the girls sewing and house-work. All learn to mend their clothes. The current cash expenses of the institution are about 50,000 kronor per year, of which amount the Freemasons contribute about 8,000 kronor. The cost of food and clothing for each child in 1874 was about 150 kronor; but, including the whole cost of administration and interest on the property, the whole expense of maintaining each child amounted to 500 kronor, or \$134. The children generally leave at the age of sixteen, and after confirmation. Places are got for the girls as domestics, and for the boys at mechanical trades.

Another similar institution which does not report to the city poor-board is the Mission Home for Children, which in 1874 provided for 63 children, at an expense of about 300 kronor per child; and there are probably enough others to increase the number of persons receiving full or partial support from the public treasury of the city or from private associations to 14,000.

It would hardly be pertinent to the subject, even if it were practicable, to undertake to estimate the relief granted by the many mechanical trades and workingmen's associations.

At the poor and work houses and charitable institutions the principal kinds of subsistence are rye bread, potatoes, barley-grits, and peas. In respect to humanity, cleanliness, and economy, these various establishments in Stockholm appear to be well administered. About twenty-five years ago there was a defalcation of some 30,000 kronor at one of the private charitable institutions, (Drottninghuset,) but it is very seldom that anything of the kind occurs.

Begging is suppressed, and it is evident that in several respects, and especially in putting those incipient criminals the vagrants into the workhouse, the Swedes set an example worthy of imitation in many parts of the United States. Between the vagabond and the burglar the step is short, and the difference slight.

#### INTEMPERANCE AS A CAUSE OF PAUPERISM.

It cannot be denied that the intemperate use of intoxicating drink is one of the leading immediate causes of pauperism. With the steady, though slow, improvement of society, such evils gradually, even if almost imperceptibly, diminish. Of the many statistical reports which, through the enlightened policy of the government, are published, there are none, that I am aware of, which come so closely and familiarly to the homes and habits of the common or poorer classes of people as those officially made by the district physicians and published in the annual report of the State Board of Health. These physicians receive a moderate salary and good quarters. One of their duties is to make trips in their districts, at public expense, to ascertain the causes of, and to endeavour to suppress, epidemic diseases. They in this way, together with their general practice, have very

good opportunities of becoming acquainted with the condition of the poorer classes. The following are a few extracts from some of the reports of these medical officers for the year 1872. The first one relates to workmen in the lumber industry :

“ Their earnings, with few exceptions, are spent at the drinking-shops, and when sickness or failing strength occurs they demand help of the commune.”—(Dr. Boquist, district in Norbotten County.)

“ Immense quantities of whisky, beer, and a very bad kind of berry-wine are consumed, and, when nothing else can be had, Hoffman’s drops. \* \* \* In consequence of this manner of living, health gives way, and not much is saved of the present really good earnings. Especially is this the case with the many iron-mill hands, who live, so to speak, for the day, which is so much the sadder as they often have large families, and cannot themselves long hold out with their hard and exhausting labor.”—(Dr. Gernandt, district in Örebro County.)

“ With regard to the misuse of intoxicating drink, the district is not marked by anything peculiar, except that here, as in other parts of Gothenburg, it is common with a large class of laborers that their earnings are used for whisky, wherefore the poorer people are both physically and morally depraved, the former showing itself through the usual consequent sicknesses, and the latter in neglect to provide for wife and children, who generally fall to the care of the poor-board.”—(Dr. Ljungberg, district in Gothenberg and Bohus County.)

“ In proportion as their earnings increase their condition in many other respects is improved—better clothes, furniture, food, &c. Yet two circumstances seem still to form a powerful hinderance to a more general pros-



perity among the laboring class: lack of thought for the morrow, and a steady continuance of intemperance.”—(Dr. Ullman, district in Gothenburg City.)

“Perhaps as a consequence of some good years with increased wages, intemperance among the population has evidently increased.”—(Dr. Seltervall, another district in Gothenburg.)

And here it may be remembered that Gothenburg is the city where a reform is claimed to have been effected by granting the whole retail of spirits to a single company. The places where liquor is retailed have been improved in tidiness, but it is doubtful if there has been a diminution in the quantity sold.

“Beverage consists mostly of sour weak beer, ordinary beer, and whisky. \* \* \* There are certainly many well-to-do peasants in the district, and not a few of the rich gentry, but by the side of these is a numerous class, not well off, dependent on others, to a great part contending with poverty or oppressed by need.”—(Dr. Möller, district in East Gotland County, generally a fine agricultural county.)

“In sanitary respects this district is one of the healthiest in our country, though little is done for the promotion of health. In general the people are untidy. \* \* \* Whisky-drinking is very common. The peasants are proud to have a number of cottages on their little farm, and therefore furnish to the small people ground to build on, but which is too small to cultivate for the most necessary wants; and as heavy rent (in labor) must be paid for the considerable privilege, the result is poverty and misery.”—(Dr. Jerling, district in Kronoberg County.)

“The great money resources caused by lumber profits



and the brisk business in general, have raised the price of subsistence, house-rent, &c., very much, and especially made man and beast power dearer than ever before known. The large earnings of laborers are, however, often enough used, to a great extent, in extravagance, wherefore earnings are not greater than before, while on the other hand the moral condition is materially impaired.” —(Dr. Baggerstedt, district in Wester Norrland County, 1873.)

“Infants not a year old very often get coffee, and not so seldom whisky, and the intestinal complaints proceeding from improper diet are attributed to ‘*teething*.’ ” —(Dr. Aström, Sveg district, in mountainous part of Jemtland County, 1873.)

“The large sums of money disbursed among the peasantry and laborers out of the favorable lumber exports of 1872, have been of but slight blessing in general. A workman at the saw-mills who, for example, has a wife and two small children, earns during the whole summer 20 to 25 crowns a week, but at autumn has not saved a penny. \* \* \* Drinking continues in a frightful degree, and the many steamers are flying grog-shops, where especially youth and even women drink to excess. \* \* \* Sadly enough, young men from fifteen to twenty-five years of age are the most addicted to drink. If matters do not improve, the population in half a score of years will be utterly demoralized.” —(Dr. Söderbaun, district in Wester Norrland County, 1873. This physician also dwells on the supersition prevalent among the people.)

“That the manner of living among these extra laborers is not the most orderly, must be apparent, and a great part of the rich earnings are spent at whisky and beer shops, where beer, whisky, and several sorts of wine

under the name of 'liberté,' 'calabria,' comprising more or less colored spirit mixtures, are served. Even champagne is not neglected. The other part of the earnings go to the traders and Jew peddlers. \* \* \* During the few years I have lived here, I have, alas, seen the moral feelings of the people sink more and more; and I believe that with the greatest part there is no other thought than the naked material."—(Dr. Kempe, another district in Wester Norrland County, 1873.)

It is due to state that these are some of the most unfavorable passages bearing on the use of spirits, but that they do not give a very exaggerated view of the improvidence which exists is borne out by statements and admissions which appear from time to time in the newspapers, and which pass unchallenged; statements like the following, which is taken from a recent elaborate yet moderate article in one of the daily journals of Stockholm, viz.: "But experience has likewise shown that high wages cause the laborers who think not of the morrow to take more Fridays (a day for dissipation) in a week, because they, in any event, had sufficient earnings for their living."

#### PAUPERISM IN NORWAY.

Norway was in advance of Sweden in abolishing the vicious principle that every one, as a matter of right, is entitled to poor-relief. Her law to this effect was enacted in 1863, and went into effect the following year. But owing partly, perhaps, to a series of bad agricultural seasons, there was increase rather than decrease in the number of persons receiving relief subsequent to this legislation. From 1851 to 1865 the average number of persons who were fully supported was 16 in every one

thousand inhabitants, while the number who were partially supported varied from 26 to 29 per 1,000 inhabitants. The expenditures for the poor gradually rose from 849,600 specie dollars in 1860 to 1,227,400 specie dollars in 1868. The latest official report which has been published on pauperism in Norway is for the year 1871, when the population was 1,741,621. The total poor receipts from all sources for that year amounted to 1,324,259 specie dollars, of which amount 447,225 specie dollars were expended in poor-care in cities. The report does not show the expenditures in the country districts, but it may be assumed that they equalled the receipts in those districts.

The whole number of persons who received relief was 161,735, or over 9 per cent. (In Massachusetts, with a population in 1870 of 1,443,156, the number of poor receiving full and partial support was 33,650, and the expense of their support was \$1,150,529.)

Of adult males who received direct relief, there were unmarried men, 5,731; married men without children, 6,347; married men with children, 14,807; widowers without children, 4,065; widowers with children, 1,714, or together, 33,664.

Of adult females who received direct relief, there were single women without children, 9,457; single women with children, 4,765; widows without children, 11,503; widows with children, 6,454; or together, 32,179.

Of separate persons who received relief for themselves alone, there were orphan legitimate children, 2,733; motherless illegitimate children, 1,164; single adult males, 5,731; single adult females, 9,457; widowers without children, 4,065; widows without children, 11,503; or together, 34,653.



Under the head of families receiving relief, there were married men without children, 6,347; married men with children, 14,807; widowers with children, 1,714; widows with children, 6,454; unmarried women with children, 4,765; or together, 34,087. The following received relief indirectly through others: wives through husbands without children, 6,347; wives through husbands with children, 14,807; or together, 21,154; children where relief was given to married men with children, 46,513; where relief was given to widows with children, 14,648; where relief was given to unmarried women with children, 6,865; or together, 71,841.

The report contains many details as to the number of poor in each district, but does not show what number of persons received full support, nor what number were inmates of poor or work houses. Accordingly there is nothing to show the amount of out-door relief.

The public expenditures for the poor in the city of Christiania, with a population in 1871 of 66,657, amounted to 157,078 species. In this and other cities of Norway, I am informed that out-door relief has been granted to a somewhat undue extent. In Christiania are as many as seven asylums for the accommodation of 950 small children.

Throughout the country, as in Sweden, are many private endowments for the poor. Some of the public hospitals for the sick are much praised. The report of the State Board of Health of Norway for 1871, a well-printed quarto document of 173 pages, contains among other matter remarks by district physicians as to the manner of living among the common classes, of which the following are a few extracts:

“ Weak coffee plays the head rôle in the huts, together

with potatoes and raw-baked milk-cakes. \* \* Although earnings are not light, yet the lack of system, economy, and household care and industry makes the living, as one might say, from hand to mouth, and for some not even that.”—(Dr. Borchsemus, Ullensakers district, Akerhus County.)

“The style of living varies. The homes of well-to-do peasants are tasteful, neat, and sometimes luxurious, while those of the poor and of the cottagers (*husman*, corresponding to the *torpar* in Sweden) are untidy, unwholesome, and sometimes miserable. \* \* Intemperance is not great, yet, on the way home from town on the evening or night after an auction-day, there is often much drunkenness and disorder, during which knives are used and blood flows.”—(Dr. Klingenberg, Eigsberg’s district, Smaalenenes County.)

“The uniform nourishment among the poor consists of salt food and sour milk. In Fladeland district the misuse of spirituous drink prevails in a high degree, while in the Faaberg and Ringeby districts it seems to be diminishing.”—(Dr. Baumann, Christians County.)

Other passages of about the same tenor might be quoted, while, on the other hand, there is testimony in respect to a number of localities showing progress and improvement in temperance and sanitary regards.

#### OBSERVATIONS.

There being two quite distinct classes of poverty—*voluntary* and *involuntary*—it would seem very desirable that there should be returns showing what cases of relief were of the first-mentioned class, being those where the need arose from causes for which the individual relieved

was himself responsible, such as intemperance, indolence, improvidence, &c. ; and what cases were of the second or involuntary class, being those arising from the fault of others, from natural infirmity, accident, industrial depression, (produced by war, financial revulsion, or mistaken legislation,) or from failure of crops, and the like.

Without doubt one of the chief remedies against poverty is education. "Economy is not a natural instinct, but the growth of experience, example, and forethought. It is also the result of education and intelligence. It is only when men become wise and thoughtful that they become frugal." Knowledge helps much to give a person foresight, and foresight impels him to that industry and self-denial which leave something for a day of need.

So, also, education supplies sources of rational recreation that may be expected to supplant the gaming-table and the drinking-saloon. Workingmen crave some sort of diversion, and in these countries they seek it to a dangerous extent in strong drink and to a serious extent in gambling.

Intellectual pleasures are, of course, more safe and economical than the pleasures of the cup, and where they can be substituted for the latter there is almost a certainty that the party concerned is on the road to competence instead of to the poor-house. But to what extent must education be carried, in order that it shall conduce to intellectual pleasure? Clearly to that extent that one can enjoy reading good authors. It must go beyond the bare capacity to read, and, at least, to the extent of reading with ease. If a person has, in childhood, attended school, yet made no further progress than barely



to read, his reading will be no pleasure to him ; it will be a task which he will avoid, and he will seek recreation from some other source than from books.

When, therefore, the statistics of a country inform us that such a percentage of all the children have learned to read, we must ascertain what proportion of them can read with readiness, if we would know to what extent their education will probably prove to be any source of recreation for them.

It happens that there are some statistics showing the proficiency of young Swedes in reading. Every summer about 30,000 young men from the working-classes are called out for the first time, at the age of twenty-one, for two weeks of military drill. The official report in regard to those called out in 1875, all of whom were born in the year 1854, shows, first, that out of 30,487 young men from all parts of the country who presented themselves at the different mustering-stations, 7,058, or 23.15 per cent. were rejected for physical disability ; and, secondly, that of 25,173 who were accepted, only 1 per cent. were unable to read, while only 52.4 per cent. could read with good readiness. There were 46.6 per cent. somewhat practiced in reading. It can hardly be presumed that the 23 per cent. who were rejected for physical disability could have passed so good an examination in reading as those who were accepted. Hence we may infer that scarce half the working population can read with ease and pleasure. And yet all of these young men were brought up at the common schools, and some may have attended the high schools, under a compulsory system of education. A similar system exists in Norway, and the valuable test above mentioned fairly illustrates the practical efficiency of the " folk " or common schools in both

countries. It shows that much improvement must be introduced before intellectual diversions can supplant the habit of drinking and the wasteful indulgence which now prevail.

Again, a great obstacle to the well-being of the people is to be found in the low state of female education. The provision for the education of girls remains much inferior to that for boys. For the latter the State provides high schools in every leading town; but for girls, only common schools. The fact that out of 133,249 children born alive in Sweden in 1874 there were 19,546, or 14 per cent., who died before they were a year old, is a sad proof of the ignorance among women.

The same year 10.8 per cent. of all the births of children were illegitimate, which is an additional proof of the subordinate and inferior position occupied by females of the humbler classes. The wrongs and trials which they are subjected to from the coarse and vulgar are, when summed up, indeed great. With the elevation of the mother in those qualities which inspire respect and obedience, there will come, of course, a marked improvement in the character of those whom she nurtures; and especially in the development of their habits of thrift. It is the moral excellence of the mothers that makes the moral greatness of the State.

The number of savings-banks in Sweden had increased from 186 in the year 1865 to 271 at the end of 1873. In 1865, there was one depositor to every seventeen inhabitants, and the increase was steady every year, so that at the end of 1873 there was one depositor in proportion to every eight inhabitants. The amount which every depositor held in bank averaged 188.44 kronor—say \$50 gold. The whole amount on deposit at the end

of 1873 was 106,255,037 kronor, being nearly three times the amount on deposit at the end of 1865. The amount deposited in 1873 was 35,962,776 kronor, or over 5,000,000 kronor more than was deposited in the previous year, and almost four times the amount which was deposited in 1865. There is, however, reason for believing that the bulk of the deposits belong to well-to-do people; also, that the same class comprise the most of the depositors. Among this class it is quite common that every member of the family, and especially every child, has a sum in the savings-bank.

Among the humbler classes the religious sentiment is very strong, and it is not improbable that the instruction they receive in some localities from the clergy from such texts as "Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow," encourages rather than abates poverty. That misery in this world is a providential lot to be expected and almost to be coveted, is a solace which in many countries is administered to the poor from the pulpit.

In my No. 202, on the condition of the industrial classes, as published in the volume of "Commercial Relations, 1873," facts were stated in respect to a number of subjects, such as taxation, the right of suffrage, &c., affecting the welfare of the poorer classes, and they need not, therefore, be introduced here. The demand for labour is not now so great as it was in 1873, yet wages remain about as high as then. The Swedes work slowly, which is owing much, probably, to the practice of requiring them to work so many hours in the day.

Since 1873 the leading topic of discussion in Sweden has not only been that of military defense, but owing to the example of neighbouring states it now seems probable that increased military burdens will be imposed on the



people by the adoption of a plan for at least ninety days' service.

On the other hand the peasant farmers are agitating for the abolition of the stage-coach service, which for a couple of centuries has, at fixed fees, devolved on them. So the subject of doing away with fences, which are quite a heavy expense, is being discussed.

Co-operative labour, or the uniting of labour with capital, is being introduced, though slowly. There are one or two manufacturing establishments carried on wholly with such labor, and the principle is applied beneficially among operatives in various branches of manufacturing industry.

I have, &c.,

C. C. ANDREWS.









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